SECTION ACTIVITIES

**Literature Tea** | Every Monday during the semester, from 4:30-6:00pm.
Come and talk with faculty and students about everything and anything!

**Major Gathering** | Twice a semester, these gatherings bring majors together for outings, pizza parties, movie screenings, and more.

**Major, Minor & Concentrator Socials** | Once each semester, students can come learn about Literature and talk with other students who are passionate about it.

**Senior Dinner** | Graduating seniors are taken out once a year for a final farewell from their professors!

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**The Student's Guide to Literature**

“You never stop learning how to read. There are always new objects, new things to see, new ways of seeing, new dialogues with other readers.”

—Mary C. Fuller
HEAD OF LITERATURE SECTION

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**Contact us**

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An Education in Literature

Literature at MIT embraces an expansive vision of literary study. We are linked by a common interest in problems of narrative, aesthetics, genre, and media, but our curriculum explores a broad array of written, oral, and visual forms, ranging from the ancient world to the 21st century. We teach poetry, drama, and prose fiction, and also film, television, comics, memoirs, and folk music. Our courses engage students in the pleasures and challenges of reading and interpretation, expose them to fresh ways of thinking about the world, and develop valuable, transferable skills in writing and communication.

Majoring

Majoring in Literature at MIT combines broad coverage of a range of different literary and cultural fields with in-depth exploration of particular domains. Students organize their restricted electives in Literature through the Breadth Requirement according to one of two rubrics (see below): historical periods or thematic complexes. More sustained exploration of specific domains is achieved by taking seminars in areas of interest. In addition, students contemplating graduate work in Literature or a related field are encouraged to consider completing a Literature thesis.

**REQUIREMENTS**

Literature at MIT embraces an expansive vision of literary study. We are linked by a common interest in problems of narrative, aesthetics, genre, and media, but our curriculum explores a broad array of written, oral, and visual forms, ranging from the ancient world to the 21st century. We teach poetry, drama, and prose fiction, and also film, television, comics, memoirs, and folk music. Our courses engage students in the pleasures and challenges of reading and interpretation, expose them to fresh ways of thinking about the world, and develop valuable, transferable skills in writing and communication.

Concentrating

Students come to Literature to fulfill their concentrations for many reasons. Some love to read great books, plays, or poems, or want to explore film and media studies. Some wish to hone their skills in thinking and writing about literary questions.

**REQUIREMENTS**

**Concentrations** must form a coherent group. In addition to the required three subjects, a fourth subject is strongly recommended.

- **Tier II (Sampling and Intermediate)**: one or two intermediate subjects. Two six-unit sampling subjects may be combined to count as one twelve-unit intermediate subject.

- **Tier III (Seminars)**: one seminar subject.

- **One or Two subjects unrestricted**

Minoring

A Literature Minor lays the foundation for advanced study by enhancing the student’s appreciation of major narrative, poetic, and dramatic texts in relation to the cultures that produced them. In addition, it allows the student to develop familiarity with interdisciplinary approaches, and encourages engagement with film and newer media.

**REQUIREMENTS**

**Minors** must complete a total of six subjects.

- **Tier I (Introductory)**: at least one and no more than two introductory literature subjects.

- **Tier II (Sampling and Intermediate)**: two or three intermediate subjects. Two six-unit sampling subjects may be combined to count as one twelve-unit intermediate subject.

- **Tier III (Seminars)**: at least two seminar subjects.

In addition, at least two subjects in the minor program must center on materials dating before 1900. You cannot minor and major in the same area.

**BREADTH REQUIREMENTS**

Chosen in consultation with a faculty advisor, restricted electives must be taken in 4 of 5 thematic complexes or historical periods (3 of 5 for Joint Majors).

**THEMATIC COMPLEXES**

- Historical Period
- Genre
- Author Study
- Film, Media and Popular Culture
- Gender Studies, Ethnic Studies, and Theory

**HISTORICAL PERIODS**

- Ancient and Medieval
- Renaissance
- Restoration and 18th Century
- 19th Century
- 20th Century and Contemporary

**REQUIREMENTS**

**FULL MAJOR OR DOUBLE MAJOR**

180-198 units beyond GIRS

10 subjects, divided as follows:

- 3 at Seminar level
- Breadth Requirement (4 subjects)
- 3 unrestricted Literature electives

**JOINT MAJOR (21L/E OR 21L/S)**

180 units beyond GIRS

14 subjects, divided as follows:

- 2 at Seminar level
- Breadth Requirement (3 subjects)
- 3 unrestricted Literature electives
- 6 engineering or science subjects*

Double majors must complete all requirements of their 2nd major. Consult with 2nd major advisor.

Thesis: majors are encouraged to complete a thesis or a senior project in their senior year. This allows students to pursue an individualized course of study and create a lasting work of scholarship, acquiring new research and communication skills in the process.

Transfer Credit: to receive transfer credit in Literature, the transfer credit examiner must decide (a) whether the work done at an outside institution is comparable in quality and quantity to warrant credit, and (b) what kind of credit is appropriate. There is thus no guarantee that transfer credit will be granted, nor is it guaranteed, even when credit is granted, that a student will receive the 12 units of credit usual for Literature subjects at MIT.

For a more comprehensive look at Literature's educational program, please visit us at *lit.mit.edu*